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SURGEON GENERAL'S OFFICE,

WASHINGTON, D. C., *July 14, 1862.*

In order to give greater utility to the acts of Miss D. L. Dix as "Superintendent of Women Nurses" in general hospitals, and to make the employment of such nurses conform more closely to existing laws and orders of the War Department, the following announcement is made for the information and guidance of medical officers and of all concerned.

Miss Dix has been entrusted by the War Department with the duty of selecting women nurses and assigning them to general or permanent military hospitals. Women nurses are not to be employed in such hospitals without her sanction and approval, except in cases of urgent need.

Women nurses will be under the control and direction of the medical officer in charge of the hospital to which they are assigned, and may be discharged by him if incompetent, insubordinate, or otherwise unfit for their vocation.

Miss Dix is charged with the diligent oversight of women nurses, and with the duty of ascertaining by personal inspection whether or not they are properly performing their duties. Medical officers are enjoined to receive her suggestions and counsels with respect, and to carry them into effect if compatible with the hospital service.

As it will be impossible for Miss Dix to supervise in person all the military hospitals, she is authorized to delegate her authority, as herein defined, to subordinate agents, not to exceed one for each city or military district.

Women wishing employment as nurses must apply to Miss Dix, or to her authorized agents.

The army regulations allow one nurse to every ten patients (beds) in a general hospital. As it is the expressed will of the government that a portion of these nurses shall be women, and as Congress has given to the Surgeon General authority to decide in what numbers women shall be substituted for men, it is ordered that there shall be one woman nurse to two men nurses. Medical officers are hereby required to organize their respective hospitals accordingly.

Medical officers requiring women nurses will apply to Miss Dix, or to her authorized agent for the place where their hospitals are located.

Sisters of Charity will be employed, as at present, under special instructions from this office.

WILLIAM A. HAMMOND,

Surgeon General.



